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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, in this season of peace on Earth, we acknowledge that You govern in the affairs of humanity. If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without You noticing it, may our lawmakers never think that You are indifferent to what they think, say, and do. Lord, keep them ever mindful of the scarcity of their days and the importance of their work. May they seize life's second chances to fulfill Your purposes on Earth. Transform the days of our Senators into redemptive moments so that they will rise to the challenges of these momentous times. May they strive always to live worthy of Your great Name. Give them the wisdom to use Your precepts to avoid life's pitfalls, enabling You to guide them through life's seasons of darkness to a safe harbor.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 3516

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3516) to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a best-practices peer review of each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the efficacy of health care delivered at each such medical center.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

TRIBUTE TO HARRY REID

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it seems like any speech about the Democratic leader requires a mention of Searchlight, NV. There is a reason why that is. You cannot begin to understand the man until you understand where it all began, and here is where it began—a tiny mining town at the southern tip of Nevada. One teacher. Zero indoor plumbing. Miles of desert. That is Searchlight, at least the Searchlight HARRY REID knew when he was growing up. It is the kind of place where you might learn to drive at 13 or spend your summer roping cattle with a cowboy named "Sharky." In fact, if your name is "Harry Reid," that is exactly what you did.

HARRY grew up in a tiny wooden shack with a tin roof. He hitchhiked more than 40 miles to school and had a father who toiled in the hard rock mines. It goes without saying this was not an easy life. It taught some tough lessons, but HARRY had his escapes. He found one in the snap and crackle of his radio.

Searchlight didn't exactly have a radio station of its own, but every now and then, HARRY could pick up a faint signal from California. During the regular season, it carried his favorite

baseball team, the Indians. He can still rattle off Cleveland's 1948 roster. Just ask him.

HARRY himself played some baseball. He was the catcher in high school, and during his sophomore year, HARRY's team was crowned Nevada State champions. Later, after a close game on the California coast, his team won the Nevada-Arizona-California tristate playoffs as well. HARRY still treasures the big white jackets each member of the team received, not because, understand, he was the best player on the team—HARRY says he wasn't—but because of what that jacket represented: his hard work, his contributions, his worth.

Like many young men, HARRY once dreamed of a life in the majors, of cheering crowds and Commissioner's Trophies. So did I. I wanted to throw fastballs for the Dodgers. HARRY wanted to play center field at Fenway. We wound up as managers of two unruly franchises instead.

As the leaders of our parties, we are charged with picking the batting order, controlling the pitch selection, and trying our best to manage 100 opening-day starters. It isn't always easy. As HARRY has often pointed out, baseball represents a nice reprieve from the serious work of the Senate. So no matter how contentious the issue before us, we try to put politics aside—at least briefly—to trade our views on the Nats and Bryce Harper. HARRY is probably looking forward to having even more time to dedicate as a fan of the sport and never having to miss another game because of votes.

But if there is one thing HARRY loves more than baseball, it is his wife Landra and the family they built together. When HARRY first met Landra Gould, the two of them were in high school, and HARRY was hardly conflicted about his feelings for her. He recalled:

She looked like she belonged in the movies. She was smart [too]. And she'd been places. Out of my league, that's for sure.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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